

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to correct inadvertent clerical errors.

Claims 1-10, 12-15, 17, and 18 stand rejected under §103 on the basis of Nemoto and Mukai. Applicants traverse this rejection because neither Nemoto nor Mukai discloses processing “an annular shell of a run-flat tire support body” as defined in applicants’ claim 1. In addition, according to Nemoto and Mukai, processing is carried out by pressing the forming blade onto the outer diameter side of a tubular blank, as opposed to the applicants’ claimed processing according to amended claim 1, in which “the forming blade only acts on the inner diameter side of the tubular blank”.

Moreover, Nemoto and Mukai do not disclose moving a forming blade during a first operation from a fixed side-edge portion toward a movable side-edge portion, while reciprocating the forming blade in a radially outward direction, and accordingly they do not teach (or suggest) the Applicants’ solution to the following problems.

If a first moving operation which the forming blade carries out is done “from the movable side-edge portion toward the fixed side-edge portion” which is opposite to the present invention, there will likely be a forming or shaping failure (deformation) or cracking of the annular shell. The blank is made of a material of which the stretchability is relatively limited and the rigidity is relatively large, so that if forming or shaping of such blank by the forming blade is initiated from the side of the movable side-edge portion, feeding of the

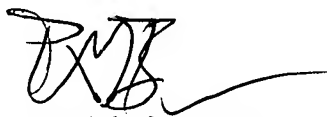
material to the point of shaping or forming can hardly take place smoothly, so the annular shell is prone to undergo a torsion and/or a fracture.

Claim 1 defines moving the forming blade at first from the fixed side-edge portion toward the movable side-edge portion while the forming blade is reciprocated in a radially outward direction, whereby the forming or shaping processing can take place smoothly. In this manner, the present invention produces a highly remarkable effect or result particularly when the blank is a metal material having a breaking stress of not less than MPa.

Also, the effect or result produced by the present invention can be further enhanced if a biasing force oriented to the fixed side-edge portion is imparted to the movable side-edge portion as in claim 7, and/or if a moving operation directed to the side of the fixed side-edge portion is imparted with the aid of a control unit as in claim 8. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, applicants believe that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The examiner should call applicants' attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,
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